The cess collected was being passed on to the concerned State Governments.

(c) and (d). The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) and (f). The Ranchi Bench of Patna High Court struck down the State Cess Act in their judgement dated 6.11.1990. It also held that the petitioners were entitled to refund of cess from 25.10.1989. The State of Bihar filed an appeal in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court had not passed any order staying operation of the judgement of the High Court. However in their judgement dated 4.4.1991, the Supreme Court, interalia, held that although the levy of cess was unconstitutional, there should be no direction to refund to the assesses of any amount of the cess collected till the date on which the levy had been declared unconstitutional. In case of Bihar, this date is 4.4.1991.

Coal Companies had discontinued collection of cess on the basis of judgement dated 6.11.1990 of High Court. Coal India Limited has field an application before the Supreme Court seeking clarification for overcoming the difficulties. Since the matter is subjudice, no instruction in regard to payment of cess to Government of Bihar has been issued.

[*English*]

Amenities for Passengers at Reservation Hall at Patna Junction

2895. SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV:
SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN:
SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of computers provided for reservation of tickets at Patna Junction are inadequate to meet the demands of the passengers;

(b) whether the basic passenger amenities in the reservation hall are also inadequate and mismanaged causing inconveniences; and

(c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to remove the difficulties of passengers in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c). The reservation system at Patna has been in the process of being computerised. There have been some inconveniences caused to passengers during the transition phase. These are being removed. The number of computerised counters have already been increased to 12 which are considered to be adequate. The staff are also going through learning process to provide faster service. The amenities in the passenger hall are also proposed to be improved by providing facilities such as exhaust fans, air coolers etc.

[*Translation*]

Sale of Substandard Eatables at Bombay and Nagpur

2896. SHRI PANDURANG PUNDLIK FUNDKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that sub-standard eatables are being sold at railway stations between Bombay and Nagpur; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to improve the quality of these items?